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YEARS AGO, PETER PARKER (A.K.A. THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN) ACCIDENTALLY BONDED WITH AN AGGRESSIVE ORGANISM CALLED A SYMBIOTE.

AFTER DISCOVERING IT INTENDED TO MAKE THEIR UNION PERMANENT, HE REJECTED THE CREATURE, WHICH SOON FOUND A NEW HOST IN DISGRACED REPORTER **EDDIE BROCK**.

THEIR UNION GRANTED EDDIE POWERS SIMILAR TO THOSE OF SPIDER-MAN, AS WELL AS A NUMBER OF OTHER UNIQUE ABILITIES. TOGETHER, THEY NOW FIGHT CRIME AS THE WICKED WEB-SLINGER CALLED...

VENOM

A DARKNESS HAS AWAKENED IN EDDIE BROCK'S ALIEN SYMBIOTE. IN RECENT WEEKS, IT HAS BEEN DIFFICULT TO CONTROL AND HAS EVEN DISOBEYED ITS HUMAN HOST.

DURING AN INADVERTENT CONFLICT WITH THE VILLAINOUS JACK O'LANTERN, THE SYMBIOTE BECAME EXCEPTIONALLY VIOLENT AND SPOKE ALOUD IN A LANGUAGE EDDIE HAS NEVER HEARD BEFORE.

ONLY AFTER BEING AMBUSHED BY A MAN NAMED **REX STRICKLAND** DID VENOM LEARN THE TRUTH — THAT HIS SYMBIOTE WAS NOT THE FIRST TO LAND ON EARTH.

REX, A FORMER SOLDIER, REVEALED THAT S.H.I.E.L.D. HAD DISCOVERED AN ANCIENT SYMBIOTE CREATURE YEARS AGO. ALONG WITH THE OTHER MEN IN HIS PLATOON, HE VOLUNTEERED TO RECEIVE A SMALL SAMPLE OF IT.

BUT WHEN VENOM STAGED A DARING RESCUE TO SAVE REX'S SQUADMATES FROM S.H.I.E.L.D. CUSTODY, HE FOUND THAT THE MEN REX ONCE KNEW WERE ALL DEAD — COMPLETELY CONSUMED BY THEIR SYMBIOTES AND GUARDING SOMETHING MUCH, MUCH WORSE...

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IT'S BEEN EIGHTEEN HOURS SINCE I SENT BROCK ON A MISSION TO SAVE MY BROTHERS.
AND TEN HOURS SINCE HE LAST MADE CONTACT.
I FEAR THE MISSION AND MY FRIENDS, ARE LOST.
AND I BEGIN TO QUESTION WHAT I HAVE DONE TRUSTING THIS MAN I HAVE NEVER MET, AND KNOW NOTHING ABOUT.
THAT'S THE HEART OF ALL OF THIS, THOUGH, ISN'T IT?
ON THE INSIDE.
BENEATH THE BLACK...
WHO IS EDDIE BROCK?

I DIG INTO HIM...

I FIND MORE QUESTIONS.

MOTHER DIED IN CHILDBIRTH. CATHOLIC AS HELL. ONLY CHILD.

FATHER WAS RICH, BUT LOST IT ALL AFTER EDDIE WAS INVOLVED IN SOME SORT OF ACCIDENT WHEN HE WAS A KID.

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU, EDDIE?

KID'S SMART. GOES TO COLLEGE. GETS A GIG AT THE *DAILY GLOBE*. WRITES ABOUT MURDER.

UNSOLVED STUFF. SERIAL KILLERS. THAT KIND OF THING.

WHY ARE YOU SO ATTRACTED TO THIS STUFF?

ONE DAY HE WRITES THE WRONG THING ABOUT THE WRONG GUY. GETS @#$%-CANNED FROM THE PAPER.

FALLS OFF THE FACE OF THE EARTH.

WHERE DID YOU GO?

SHOWS BACK UP WITH A SLICK NEW ALIEN COSTUME. CALLS HIMSELF ***VENOM.***

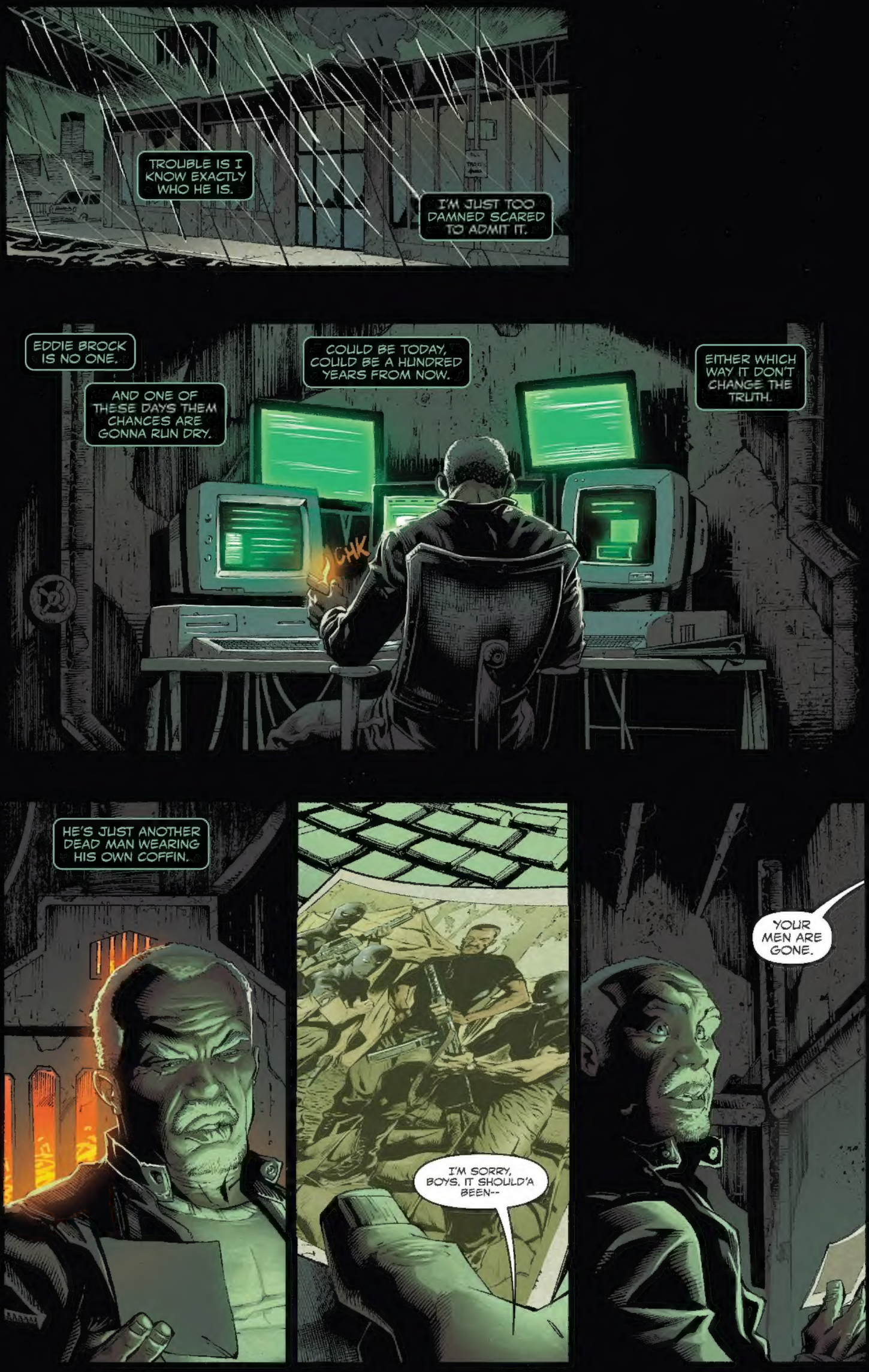
A SUPER VILLAIN IN NEW YORK TRYING TO ***KILL SPIDER-MAN.***

WHY HIM? WHAT THE HELL DID SPIDER-MAN DO TO YOU?

BUT BLINK AN EYE, AND NOW HE'S A GOOD GUY IN SAN FRANCISCO TRYING TO PROTECT PEOPLE.

WHY DO YOU CARE SO MUCH FOR THE INNOCENT?

LOTS MORE THINGS LIKE THAT, IN BETWEEN AND AFTER.
CARNAGE.
CANCER.
TOXIN.
ANTI-VENOM.
Squeeze
BORN AND UNBORN AND REBORN.
OVER AND OVER AND OVER AGAIN.
MAYBE THAT'S THE REAL STORY OF EDWARD ALLAN BROCK...
...THE MAN OF A THOUSAND SECOND CHANCES.
KAFF KAFF
THE COMEBACK KING.


TROUBLE IS I KNOW EXACTLY WHO HE IS.
I'M JUST TOO DAMNED SCARED TO ADMIT IT.
EDDIE BROCK IS NO ONE.
AND ONE OF THESE DAYS THEM CHANCES ARE GONNA RUN DRY.
COULD BE TODAY, COULD BE A HUNDRED YEARS FROM NOW.
EITHER WHICH WAY IT DON'T CHANGE THE TRUTH.
CHK
HE'S JUST ANOTHER DEAD MAN WEARING HIS OWN COFFIN.
I'M SORRY, BOYS. IT SHOULD'A BEEN--
YOUR MEN ARE GONE.

AND YOU...
YOU LIED TO US.
EDDIE... W-WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?
WHAT THE HELL DO YOU MEAN THEY'RE GONE?!
JUST CALM DOWN AND-- HEY, NO!!!
AGH!
THUD
YOU SENT US TO DIE!
WE DON'T KNOW WHAT YOUR GAME IS, STRICKLAND...
...BUT WE AREN'T PLAYING.

I FEEL IT COMING THIS TIME. THE DARKNESS SLIDING UP MY SPINE AND TAKING CONTROL.
USED TO THINK IT WAS MY OTHER TAKING OVER...BUT NO...
THIS IS SOMETHING ELSE. SOMETHING... INFECTING US.
SOMETHING EVIL.
W-WHAT? WHAT DID YOU JUST SAY?!
GOT TO STOP US. NEED TO FOCUS.
REGAIN CONTROL BEFORE WE KILL THIS MAN.
TSSS
LOSING GROUND. DARK...SEEPING IN... AROUND...EDGE...
FIGHT THIS! BE STRONGER, BROCK!
R-REX!

MOVE!
AGHHHH!
MY GOD, SON. T-THAT LANGUAGE YOU SPOKE...
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?
YOU...
YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW, DO YOU?
TURN ON THE TV.

STARK TECH PLUMMETS. WHAT IS
--MULTIPLE SIGHTINGS ALL ACROSS THE CITY TONIGHT AFTER WHAT WITNESSES ARE DESCRIBING AS, AND I'M QUOTING HERE, "AN OIL-COVERED DRAGON" ERUPTED FROM THE SEWERS HERE IN UPPER MANHATTAN.
NO.
NO, THAT CAN'T BE REAL...
IT WAS BEING TRANSPORTED WITH YOUR MEN.
THEY...THEY WERE INFECTED. LIKE ME JUST NOW, ONLY...WORSE. MORE POWERFUL.
THEY ALMOST KILLED ME, REX. AND THEN YOUR MEN UNLEASHED THAT...THING AND IT KILLED THEM.
RIPPED THEIR SYMBIOTES OFF OF THEM LIKE IT WAS NOTHING.
WHAT IS IT? WHAT THE HELL HAVE YOU BROUGHT ME INTO?
I...
...I THOUGHT IT WAS DEAD.

"IT BEGAN IN THE WAR.
"WE WERE PINNED DOWN BY A SNIPER WE COULDN'T FIND. WE'D WASTED WHAT LITTLE AMMO WE HAD ON RIFLES THAT BARELY WORKED.
"I WAS 19 YEARS OLD.
"WITH NO COVER, AND AIR SUPPORT TOO FAR AWAY...
"WE WERE OUT OF OPTIONS.
"SO WE DUG. WE DUG IN THE @#$% TO STAY ALIVE.
"WITH EVERY SHOVEL FULL OF DIRT, ONE OF MY FRIENDS WOULD DIE NEXT TO ME.
"I DIDN'T THINK I'D EVER BEEN MORE SCARED IN MY LIFE.
"BUT...I JUST HADN'T DUG DEEP ENOUGH.
"WE DISCOVERED TOO LATE WHAT BECAME OF THE LAST UNIT TO WANDER INTO THIS TRAP.
"THEY HAD DIED THE SAME WAY WE WOULD...
"...WHILE DIGGING OUR OWN GRAVE.

STRICKLAND! WHAT THE @#$% ARE YOU DOING?! DIG, GODDAM--
"I WASN'T NO KINDA WAR HERO.
KRAK
"I WANT YOU TO GET THAT OUT OF YOUR HEAD RIGHT NOW.
"I DID SOME HORRIBLE THINGS OVER THERE, BROCK.
"FOR ALL I KNOW THE MAN GUNNING US DOWN HAD FAIR RIGHTS TO HIS REVENGE.
KRAKA DOOOM
"I JUST WASN'T ABOUT TO LET HIM CLAIM IT.
"NOT THAT DAY.
"I KNEW MY BROTHERS WOULD NEVER GET THAT TRENCH DUG WHILE SITTING IN THIS @#$%'S CROSSHAIRS.
"BUT AGAIN, I AIN'T CAPTAIN AMERICA. I KNEW I COULDN'T GET TO THE SHOOTER IN TIME.

"BUT I COULD DAMN SURE SOAK UP SOME BULLETS.
"EVERY ONE OF 'EM I TOOK WAS ONE THAT DIDN'T TAKE MY FRIENDS.
"ONE MORE SECOND FOR THEM TO GET TO COVER.
"THAT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE THE END OF MY STORY, BROCK.
"MAYBE THEY'D GIVE MY DAD A MEDAL. SPIN SOME BULL AND TELL HIM HOW BRAVE I WAS.
"BUT THAT AIN'T HOW THE STORY ENDS.
"I REMEMBER LAUGHING AS I LOOKED INTO THE SKY TO SEE THE AIR SUPPORT WE HAD PRAYED FOR.
"I REMEMBER FEELING GUILTY AT THE RELIEF I FELT AS I CLOSED MY EYES AND WAITED.
"AND THEN ALL I FELT WAS NAPALM.

"I SAY ALL OF THAT TO SAY THIS:
"WHEN THE MEN WHO WOULD GRAFT MY SYMBIOTE ON TO ME AND TURN ME INTO A MONSTER CAME WITH THEIR...OFFER...
"...I WASN'T REALLY IN ANY POSITION TO ARGUE.
"I REMEMBER FURY IN THE SHADOWS.
DO IT.
"AND TO THIS DAY, I HAVE NO IDEA WHY HE CHOSE ME OF ALL PEOPLE.
"I WAS NOTHING SPECIAL.
"HELL, MAYBE THAT WAS THE POINT.
"I THOUGHT I HAD SEEN THE DEVIL IN THE JUNGLE.
"THOUGHT I HAD SEEN HORROR IN THE WAR.
"BUT I LEARNED THAT DAY THAT I HAD NEVER SEEN TRUE DARKNESS.

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"I WOKE UP DROWNING. COULDN'T BREATHE.

"AND THEN

". I LEARNED I DIDN'T NEED TO BREATHE NOT ANYMORE.

"THE SYMBIOTE THEY GAVE ME WAS JUST A ***SAMPLE*** OF THIS. BEAST. THIS HORRIBLE, OLD THING.

"BUT EVEN WITH THAT SMALL PIECE

" I FELT LIKE I COULD BREAK THE GODS OVER MY KNEE

"I SAW EVERYTHING IN THAT MOMENT

"THE UNIVERSE, AND THE TISSUE THAT BINDS EVERYTHING, MOVING LIKE TENDRILS THROUGH THE VOID...

"I KNEW AT ONCE THAT IT WAS ANCIENT OLDER THAN US.

"OLDER THAN THE STARS.

"I SAW GLIMPSES OF WHERE IT HAD BEEN, AND ..AND THE HORRORS IT HAD UNLEASHED UPON COUNTLESS CIVILIZATIONS THAT IT HAD DRIVEN INSANE, AND THEN DEVOURED.

"AND JUST WHEN I THOUGHT MY MIND WOULD COLLAPSE FROM THE ..FROM THE ENORMITY OF IT ALL.

". IT AWOKE I ***FELT IT.*** AND IT SPOKE.

"I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT THE WORDS MEANT THEN...

" BUT I DO NOW BECAUSE I'VE BEEN HEARING THEM SCREAMING IN MY NIGHTMARES EVER SINCE

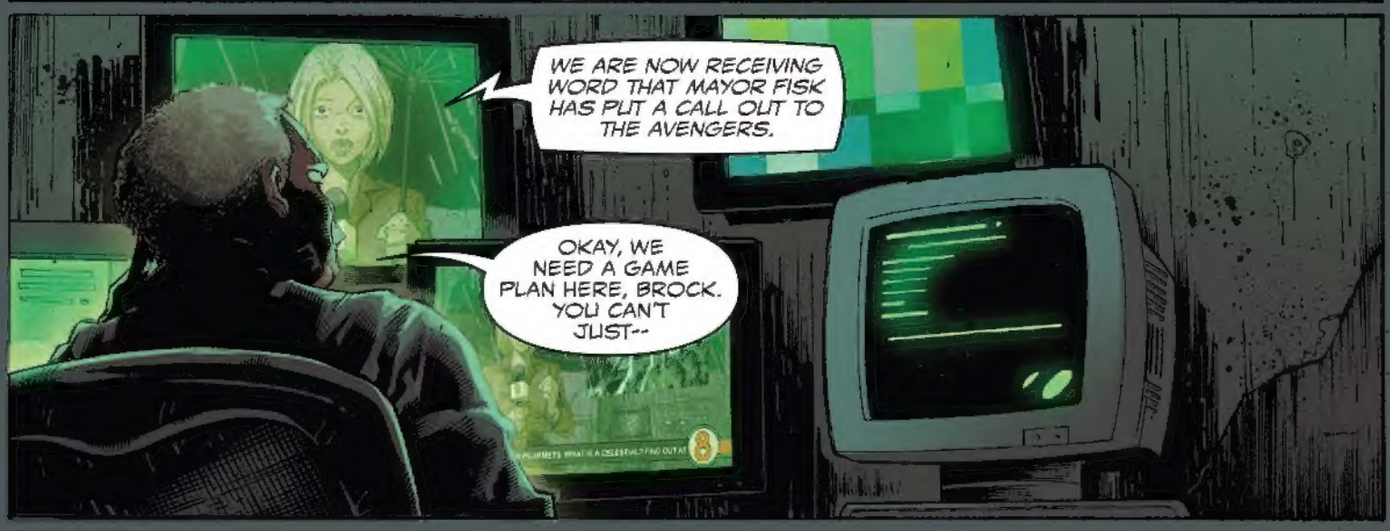
"IT SAID

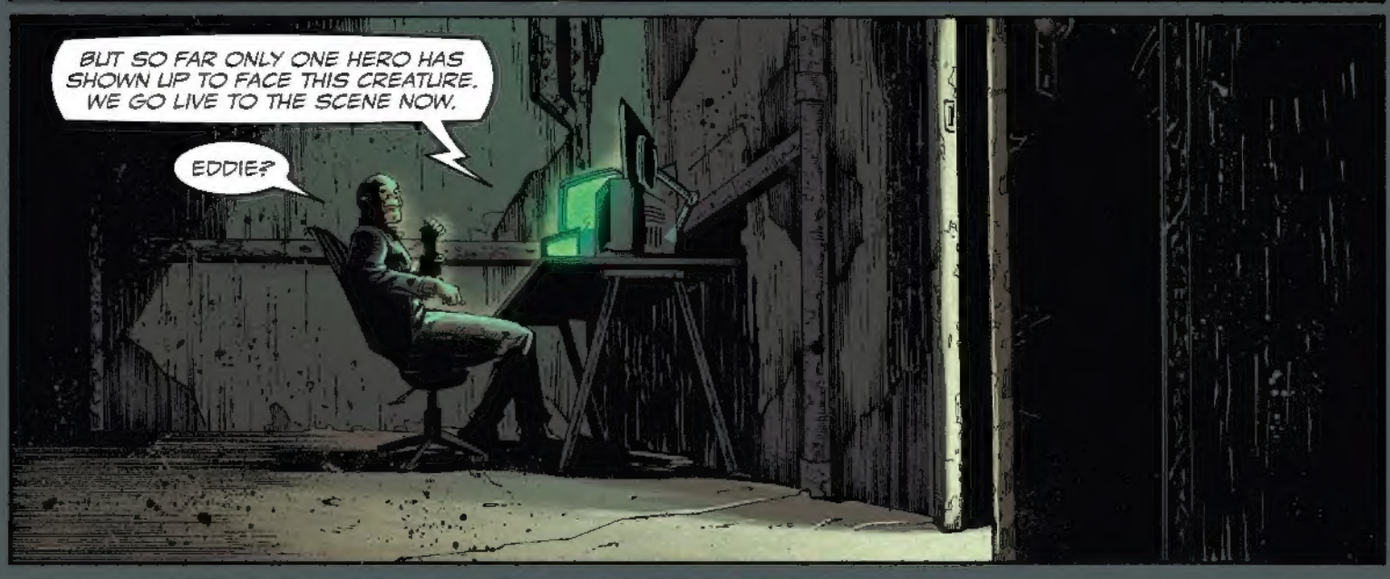
NEW YORK.
NOW.

"... GOD IS COMING."

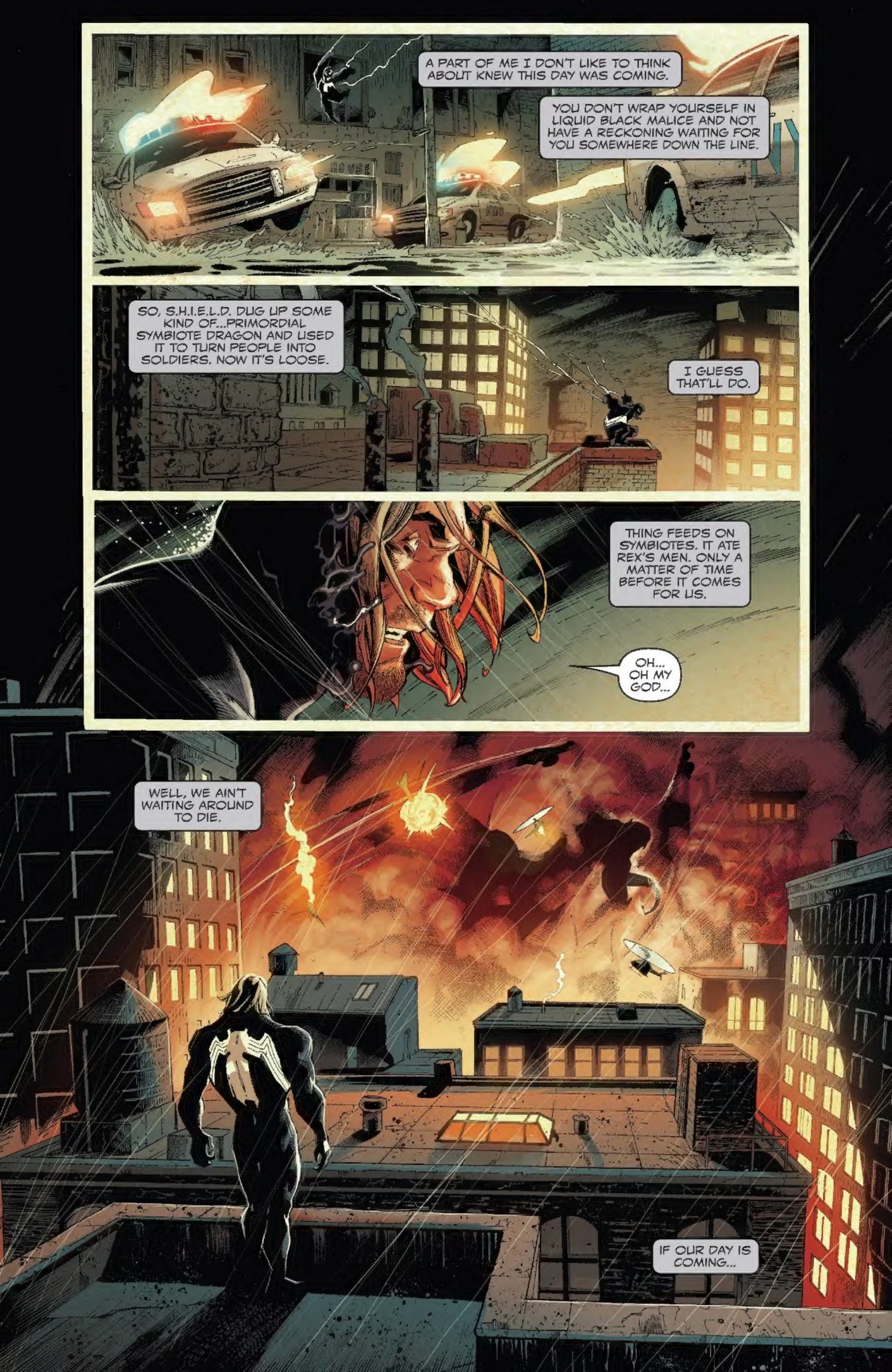
AYYY

--LIVE ON THE SCENE AS THE MYSTERIOUS CREATURE HAS REAPPEARED!
AH, HELL.


WE ARE NOW RECEIVING WORD THAT MAYOR FISK HAS PUT A CALL OUT TO THE AVENGERS.
OKAY, WE NEED A GAME PLAN HERE, BROCK. YOU CAN'T JUST--


BUT SO FAR ONLY ONE HERO HAS SHOWN UP TO FACE THIS CREATURE. WE GO LIVE TO THE SCENE NOW.
EDDIE?

THE CITY IS IN CHAOS TODAY, AS SPIDER-MAN HAS ARRIVED TO COMBAT WHAT CAN ONLY BE DESCRIBED AS--
AH, @#$%!


A PART OF ME I DON'T LIKE TO THINK ABOUT KNEW THIS DAY WAS COMING.
YOU DON'T WRAP YOURSELF IN LIQUID BLACK MALICE AND NOT HAVE A RECKONING WAITING FOR YOU SOMEWHERE DOWN THE LINE.
SO, S.H.I.E.L.D. DUG UP SOME KIND OF...PRIMORDIAL SYMBIOTE DRAGON AND USED IT TO TURN PEOPLE INTO SOLDIERS. NOW IT'S LOOSE.
I GUESS THAT'LL DO.
THING FEEDS ON SYMBIOTES. IT ATE REX'S MEN. ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE IT COMES FOR US.
OH... OH MY GOD...
WELL, WE AIN'T WAITING AROUND TO DIE.
IF OUR DAY IS COMING...

...LET IT COME.
TO BE CONTINUED...

VENOM

#3!

HEY, VENOMANIACS! AT THE TIME OF THIS WRITING, VENOM #1 ISN'T EVEN ON SALE YET, SO WE DON'T HAVE ANY LETTERS FROM YOU AT THE MOMENT. DON'T LET THAT STOP YOU, THOUGH! GO GRAB #1 AND LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK OF THE WHOLE STORY SO FAR BY WRITING TO US AT SPIDEYOFFICE@MARVEL.COM! BE SURE TO MARK YOUR LETTERS "OKAY TO PRINT"!

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